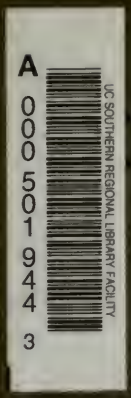
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ISCONCEPTIONS

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MISCONCEPTIONS

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MISCONCEPTIONS

By "SARACEN."

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TO EUTYCHE

"Lines I write the first time and the last time"
—ROBERT BROWNING

1001586

PREFACE.

Of the following verses by far the greater majority have had an origin of necessity, having been written to supply the needs of *T. C. D.*, the Dublin University Magazine. At the suggestion of certain friends, and for a personal reason, I have collected them together and added the very few verses which I have written since leaving Trinity College.

In my reading of English poetry (which has been almost entirely subsequent to the writing of these verses) I have occasionally come across phrases and terms of expression which bear a resemblance to words which I have used. Wherever it was possible that I might have read these sources before my verses were produced, or that they might have become familiar to me through the medium of current quotation, I have altered my own phraseology; but otherwise have allowed it to stand as, at all events subjectively, original.

This does not apply to epithets borrowed from the Greek or Roman classics which I have once or twice deliberately adopted, following therein a well-known precedent.

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MISCONCEPTIONS.

We shall go laughing, laughing, laughing,
Away and over the olive hill,
When the earth is drunk with her June-tide quaffing
And the valley still.

And the birds with a rustle of tremulous wings
In a path of singing will halo your head,
For the birds sing where the heart sings,
And joy is perfected.

Light on the sunbeams shall our spirits mingle.
What of the rain! If rain there be—
We shall find shelter in a little dingle
Where you will lie close to me.

For everything shall then conspire
To bind us in immutable bands,
And higher still, and ever higher
Shall blaze our love, to loveless lands

A beacon and an augury,
At which the wise, the leaden-hearted wise,
Will wonder; but the fools will see
Angels descending from the skies.

Then will you turn half-questioning eyes
that say
"Dear, I have dreamed. Can it be
dreaming this?"
And I shall smile in my old silent way,
And bend to seal the silence with a kiss.

CURLEWS.

Over the city the curlews call,
Call and whistle, and call and cry;
Wailings adrift from the night's dark pall,
Ghostly wailings across the sky.
Over the houses where men are striving,
Worrying, worshipping, wantoning, wiving,
How they mock at us as they fly
We who work in a petty passion
All unseeing, all contriving
But to build into our fashion
Godhead and Eternity!

They laugh: for over the fens they cried,
Over the fenlands, dank and misted,
When the lonely bittern pried
And the tidal streams ran twisted,
Where the city lifts her pile,
Where the reeking smoke ascends,
Where the crimes of men defile
Earth, and the sea where the tired land ends.
And when we are phantoms, you and I,
All of us forgotten, all,
Still will the curlews cry and call,
Still will the curlews call and cry.

When the city is but dust—
Dust of Babylon, dust of Nineveh,
Dust of Sodom and dust of Troy—
Damned eternally for the sin of her,
Damned for her grief and her little joy;
They will call, as call they must,
Wailing over the grassy sweep,
Wailing out into the deep,
Wailing to a setting sun :
Ever, forever the curlews call—
Call and whistle and call and cry.

AVE.—VALE.

"Spring in The Alps."

When the birds sing mad from the swelling branches
And the first flowers steal through the waste of snow;
When the streams flow brimming, the thawed lake ripples,
And silken breezes softly blow;
From wood and from heath and from low-land fallow,
From slumbering vale and guardian steep,
From torrent and pool and sunwarmed shallow,
The spirits of earth begin to creep.

In the oak the dryad combs her tresses,
The flocks leap wild to the pipes of Pan,
The laughter of nymphs shines light through the water,
And violets crown the fairy van.
But the snow wraiths wither and wilt in the sun
And the ice-born maidens are weary and sad,
For their time of pleasure is well-nigh run—
Yet the birds are singing, the earth is glad.

The icicles shrink, and the last drift narrows,
The winter is passing, but, ere it fades,
The earth and the snow hold revel together
Where the white still gleams in the quickening glades.
The rough faun glides with the maid of frost,
The wood nymph catches the ice-king's sigh;
One night they gathered in mingled host,—
Dawn breaks—and the children of winter die.

WE ARE TOO FAT.

We are too fat,
Too stuffed with greasy self-respect.
Our maxims are so pat;
We love our sect
Because—it is the image of ourself.
Our common delft
Seems to us finest porcelain,
We worship pelf
Not God,—for God has long ago been slain
Upon the altar of complacent faith;
And all in vain
The creed of love and charity,
While we
Have driven Life into the shape of Death,
And moulded all into a narrow frame
Of meaningless respectability.

CHILD'S SONG.

Come away, Little One. Come with me—
Come where the woodpecker taps on the tree,
Seeking for ever the hoard of gold
Stored up safe in the ages old :
Perhaps we shall find it, you and I,
Hidden away in the chestnut high.

Come away, Little One. Come to the wood,
We shall taste of the fairies' food.
Honey sweet from the linden flower,
Rain-drops quivering after the shower,
Wee wild strawberries, red and sweet,
All the nice things that the fairies eat.

Come away, Little One. Come to the cave
Where the Queen of Joy was the ogre's slave;
Till the prince, with the magic helm and shield,
And the sword that none but he could wield,
Slew him; married the maid of laughter;
And duly lived happy for ever after.

Come away, Little One. Hand in hand
We'll wander the ways of fairyland,

Dance in the moonshine; hide in the leaves;
Sleep on the hammocks the spider weaves;
And none shall know of the things we have
seen
In the land of the wonderful might-have-
been.

LUCRETIUS.

"TANTUM RELIGIO POTUIT SUADERE MALORUM."

GREAT-HEARTED unbeliever, whose belief
In all the manifold promise of mankind
Swells through the centuries,—thou whose eagle mind
Long since descried our origins of grief,
Still does the message of thy passionate page
Bring fiery comfort to the haggard heart,
And the stern gospel quickened by thy art
Grows to fruition in this latter age.
Broken at last the priesthood's iron rod;
No more the crimson category of crime,
Blood sacrifice to an avenging God,
Incarnadines the calendars of Time.
The sun has risen! Thou thunderest from the night
"Such infamies religion could incite."

DIRGE OF THE COLCHIANS OVER ABSYRTIS.

(From "The Hellespont.")

Carry him slowly, bear him safe
The last of an ancient line;
No more the Colchian kings shall boast
Descent from Zeus divine.

Carry him safely, bear him slow
To where his mother waits;
The coming of a victor lord
Upon the western gates.

Carry him tenderly, bear him soft,
For he was young and fair;
And brighter than the Golden Fleece
The ringlets of his hair.

Carry him sadly, bear him sure
Unto the funeral pyre:
The noblest victim in our land
Is offered to the fire.

ROWING SONG OF THE ARGONAUTS.

(From "The Hellespont.")

(On their voyage home after being many times saved by Medea.)

Bend to the oar, till the sharp prows gore
The crest of the meeting wave;
Bend to the oar, till the waters hoar
In tortured eddies rave;
Bend to the oar, till we reach the shore;
Bend to the oar, bend to the oar.

Ours is the Fleece, and sacred Greece
Shall hold the Colchian spoil;
Ours is the Fleece, and glad release
From the appointed toil;
Ours is the Fleece, the foemen cease;
Ours is the Fleece, ours is the Fleece.

Welcome the bride, our royal guide,
Welcome the magic maid;
Welcome the bride whose art defied
The snake, the fire, the blade;
Welcome the bride to Iolchos wide;
Welcome the bride, welcome the bride.

THE SWISS ALPS, 1917.

Fiercely the warring nations strive and tear
Around this high-built home of ancient peace,
The bitter snarlings of the guns ne'er cease
To shake the stillness of this quiet air;
But the high mountain brows, inviolate,
Look down with calm and undisturbed gaze
Upon the red flood tide of war that plays
About them, stretching eager crests of hate
Toward their peaks. Unharassed they remain
To view the endless battles of all time
Fought out beneath, careless of who shall gain
The prize,—for they may ever stand sublime:
While from afar the weary strugglers see
Their white and unapproached majesty.

REQUIEM.

The falling petals of the broom
Spangle the stream with golden bloom,
And bright along the hollow lane
The woodbine wreathes her flowering chain.

Upon the hilltop neighs the steed,
The trout are leaping as they feed,
And close beside the silvery fall,
Motionless, stands the heron tall.

All else is bourgeoning in its prime—
For me is nigh the fading time,
When life and love alike shall cease,
And I shall dwell in endless peace.

BLACK MAGGIE.

Black Maggie and I were courtin'
For nigh upon sivin year,
An' I hadn' the sperrit to ax her
Me lonesome lot to cheer.

For Maggie was gran' in her apron,
Her cap, an' her ribbons, an' al';
An' manny's the gentry as eyed her
A-waitin' beyant at the hal!

An' ivery lad in the counthry
Was wishful a glance av her eye,
An' now she'd be shmilin' an' winkin',
An' now she'd let on to be shy.

But the masther was knowin' me wishes
An' he built me a purty sheebeen,
An' he lifted me wages a thrifle,
An' toult me to ax me colleen.

So Maggie an' I got married,
An' now we've been wedded a year;
An' Maggie and I 've *stopped* courtin',
—An' I bought me sheebeen dear.

IGNORANCE.

I TALK of that we know not, and a friend
Talks with me; blind, we wrestle o'er the ground
Where all have battled, yet where none has found
Victory, only strife unto the end.
Thales, and Plato and the Stagyrite
And those great tragic three, and Socrates.
How valiantly they grappled towards the light
Half visioned! Aye, and unto the least of these
Gay idle creatures, who has paused awhile
Amid her laughter; paused awhile and thought
On things unfathomable, till a smile
Chased thoughts aside and left the truth unsought.
So do we strive. The cat beside the fire,
Purrs, sleeps, and sleeping mocks at our desire.

EVENING.

Hush! The evening shadows lengthen,
Broaden, mingle, flood together;
And the sun's last rays are burning
All the purple from the heather.

From the shadow-cradled valleys,
Slipping to the land of dreams,
Comes the distant, slumberous, murmur
Of a hundred happy streams.

So, when evening's touch has hidden
All the horror of the clay,
May we loose our life, and gladly
Vanish with the dying day.

SONNET.

How many souls have loved their little loves
Upon this earth, and lived their little lives;
Panted a little, fretted on the gyves
Of creed and custom—then amid the droves
Of broad-backed oxen fed their battening way;
Till came the butcher with his questing eye
And sharpened knife—or else with mumbled sigh
Passed to a lean-flanked mouldering decay.
All our entanglement of hopes and fears
Is tossed into the crucible of time;
Swept in the slow procession of the years
To nothingness. Each man is but a mime
Mouthing upon a visionary stage
The dreams of youth, the maunderings of age.

YEARS AGO.

We met and laughed and kissed awhile
Years ago, years ago;
Behaved in most improper style
Years ago, years ago!

We thought ourselves exceeding wise
Years ago, years ago;
And told no small amount of lies
Years ago, years ago!

We parted with apparent grief
Years ago, years ago;
And heaved a sigh of vast relief
Years ago, years ago!

And yet, I think, we loved a span
Years ago, years ago;
Ere she was maid or I was man
Years ago, years ago!

And though the world proclaimed us mad
Years ago, years ago;
I still remember, and am glad
For years ago, years ago!

FAR in the distance I marked it, high reared
'mid the tumult and tossing;
Rampant over its fellows, majestic, superb,
unapproached,
Sweeping and thundering onwards. The
rival waves of the ocean
Seemed but as ripples beneath it, that
fawned and wondered and murmured
Licking its feet, and were merged in the
mighty mass of the monster.
Onward and nearer and nearer, the white
foam cresting its summit,
Furrowed and ridged and seamed, with
multitudinous wavelets
Breaking the smooth of its height; while
the seamews eddied and clamoured
Stooping above, and the reef where the
smaller billows were broken
Stayed not its path; still onwards with
frenzied soul unappeased,
All the long line of its crest uplifted, ter-
ribly beetling
Imminent over the shore: the white sun
shone through its bulwarks
Glinting in silver and green, the shadow
gloomed in its caverns

Curving forward and downward, till now with the mutter of menace
Swelled to a pæan of rage, it swooped on its foeman and scattered
Shingle and sand from its course and fiercely, greatly defiant,
Leapt at the cliff, enfolding its crags in a torrent of greenness,
Searching through cranny and cleft, and scattering high to the heavens
One wild whirlwind of foam, as it mounted and surging exultant
Raved over buttress and ledge. Yet slower it stormed and slower,
Joined in gigantic grappling; till, weary with infinite striving,
Seething and hissing in hate it stayed, and hung for an instant
Pressed on the mould of the cliff; 'ere vanquished, bellowing anger
Backwards it fell, and in falling, contemptuous, swept from its pathway
All of its comrades that hastened to aid in its onslaught, and moaning
Mingled itself in the sea;—and vanished. So the wave broke.

DAWN AFTER THE DANCE.

SUDDEN a gleam o'er the enfolding grey
Shivered and paled. Came again and stayed.
Then bade the embers of the night to fade
And slowly grew into a perfect day.

O'er sea and plain and mountain washed the light,
And burnished into flame the clouds on high,
And scattered rosy petals in the sky,
And swept away the tresses of the night.

IN MEMORIAM.

(R. Y. TYRRELL, S.F.T.C.D., LITT.D.).

MASTER, farewell. Loosed is the silver cord,
And thou hast ventured o'er the shadowy ford,
Ere yet fulfilled the three score years and ten
That are the heritage of mortal men.

So passes one who tilled a stony earth
And brought a thousand lasting flowers to birth;
While, year by year, fresh labourers found their toil
Lightened where he before had loosed the soil.

No pedant he, not his the useless store
Of dull, dry, docketed, decaying lore;
But his the secrets of the past to unfold,
To touch, and touching turn the dust to gold.

Sleep, Master, sleep. We that remain shall strive
To keep the magic of thy name alive;
And our grey courts shall hail thee to the end
As scholar, poet—most of all as friend.

SONNET.

O THAT some fruitful kindly power might pen
Those half-imagined thoughts that fade away
Unravelled ere knit up, again to stray
Lost in the limbo of forgetting. Then
Might the old 'snake be slain and Eden gained.
For oft in voyaging we touch the fringe
Of a lost continent, and glimpse the tinge
Of heaven's wide-flung gates, with wild eyes strained
To pierce the distance; but the colours pale,
Life's current sweeps us on: again we leave
Behind the mysterious land, and still we fail;
Failing forget, and with forgetting grieve.
Once more the dull accustomed ways we plod.
But whose hand stayed our questing? Was it God?

THE SCULPTOR SPEAKS.

I WROUGHT a statue, pure and fair,
And beautiful, most beautiful.
A maiden with melodious hair
Rippling in cadences unto the ground,
And nobly perfect in her nakedness.
I dressed her in the wear,
Wantonly slashed, with delicate bosom half pent
In lecherous gyves of gaudy ornament.
White veiling clung around her body slim,
And silken gossamer folded every limb.
I hid each tress.

Then called the people to behold
This thing that I had wrought :
They found
Beauty in ugliness—for I had fame.—
They murmur'd wisely of the silken garb,
They praised the tinsel, crying it for gold,
They swallowed in the bait and felt no barb.

Then I tore from the figure the dress,
And it shone with the tender light
Of the moon on a misty night,
Beautiful, beautiful, white.
But they shrieked, and turned from the sight,

They shuddered in feigned fright,
They fled
Blaspheming forth obscenity.

I lied to them, I laughed and lied,
And lied; they took me for a god.
They worshipped me. I gave them drink,
The soft soul-snaring draught of lies;
Their own sweet drink; yet somehow mine was brewed
The sweeter, deadlier. So they worshipped me.

I gave them wine,
The clear red quickening wine of truth.
They knew it not. They feared to taste of it
And drove me as a poisoner from the land.

MY LADY.

Tell me, stranger passing by,
Have you seen my Lady nigh?
Have you seen my Lady?
Many a maiden have I seen,
Peasant lass and royal queen,
All might be your Lady!

She is small and she is white,
She is all the world's delight,
And the heavens adore my Lady.
Many are white and many small
And the world's delight to all
True lovers is their Lady!

In her voice are the birds of Spring,
And the sun and the gossamer's fashioning
Is the hair of my dear Lady.
The murmur of love is sweetest sound,
And with gold fair maids by the sun are crowned.
How shall I know your Lady?

Her eyes, more blue than a Tuscan lake,
Flash as steel in the light awake,
Thus may you know my Lady!
Nay, but many an eye of blue
Dim to me may flash for you.
Nor thus may I know your Lady!

On her brow is the flame of truth,
In her heart is Mary's ruth,
And she *is* Love, my Lady.
God has blessed us both my son :
Of such the wide earth holds but one.
Yes, I have seen your Lady.

'LET US EAT AND DRINK.'

In the dark misty shadow space
Of our mysterious dwelling place
No passions stir the souls of men;
Nor hope nor fear can fret us then.

Come then my love; abide with me,
A little while my joy to be;
And, since there waits no heaven above,
Make heaven on earth for me, my love.

"MIDDLE AGES IMAGININGS."

I.—THE CARDINAL.

"However it fell out that on a certain day when his Eminence had just celebrated Mass in the King's chapel, he left in great haste and still bearing his vestments upon him. But in the great hall a messenger from the King accosted him. To whom his Eminence replied in wrath that 'he knew nought of such things' and that he called God to witness his innocence; and even as he spoke he fell dead, wherefore was all his treason made known."

HASTE ye and hustle ye—comes the Lord Cardinal,
Pack ye as close as the peas in a pod,
Mark all the nobles a-buzzing around him,
Princes and prelates awaiting his nod.
Hey for the Cardinal,
Way for the Cardinal,
Courted of man and ordained of God.

Master of many a mansion and acreage,
Waiting to step in the shoes of the Pope,
Friend of the King, and the chief of his councillors,
Mighty dispenser of scaffold and rope.
Hey for the Cardinal,
Way for the Cardinal,
See how he struts it in scarlet and cope!

Think you he'll sign the petitions awaiting
him,
Grant a reprieve from the *auto da fé?*
Pardon the sinners? Relieve the distressed?
Does the black eagle relinquish his prey!
Hey for the Cardinal,
Way for the Cardinal,
Aye, sir, we'll witness some burnings to-
day!

He'd never rescue a wretch from the
faggots;
Heretic holocaust pleases him well.
Thieves, unbelievers, possessors of secrets,
Such must be scholared with torture and
cell.
Hey for the Cardinal,
Way for thē Cardinal,
Marry, he'll hasten their journey to hell.

Hist! Here's a messenger hot from his
Majesty,
Plucking the chief of the guard by the
sleeve.
Some matter of import concerning his
Eminence?

Look! They prevent him from taking his leave.
Hey for the Cardinal,
Way for the Cardinal,
Somebody'll pay for this jest before eve.

What does he say?—Oh, a truce to your jabberings,
How can I hear if ye cackle like geese?
"May the Almighty condemn me if guilty"
Nobly responded! What? Peace, ye fools, peace.
Hey for the Cardinal,
Way for the Cardinal,
Conjuring God to secure his release.

Zounds! He has fallen. His prayer has been answered.
See if he's dead, someone. Give him a prod.
Oh the arch-hypocrite, hoist on his own petard,
Soon to be worm-riddled under the sod!
Hey for the Cardinal,
Way for the Cardinal,
Loathed of man and condemned of God.

II.—THE HERMIT.

"Yet did his lady, for whom he had renounced all things, tire of him at the last, and my lord, stricken with penitence, turned from his unholy life and, entering the Church, spent his days alone in the mountains praying and fasting. And in three years he was found dead, but a picture of his lady was still upon him."

Day after day the slow suns rise,
Day after day the red suns set,
Day after day the vain regret
Chills my young heart and dims my eyes.

I, who have sworn to serve my God
With fasting, penitence, and tears,
Can ne'er forget the face that sears
My soul: and ever till the sod

Grows greener where my corpse is laid
I must remember all those hours
Of noble sin. The evil powers
Have gripped too deep my life, and made

My being festered. Even now
Were she to call me, I would leave
My scourge, my cowl, my books, and weave
Our lives together—and my vow

Would melt away as April snow
Before our love's fierce fire. But she
Calls not, and sin has found its fee
In this eternity of woe.

Day after day the weary round,
The prayers, the fasting, and the pain.
All time has ceased. The new moons wane,
And all in solitude is bound.

No human foot, no human cry
Breaks the sad silence; the bleak wind
Moans cheerlessly; for I have sinned,
And I must suffer till I die.

The flicker of the fire can cast
Strange shadows as if one was nigh;
And oft I seem to hear a sigh
Borne round me in the rushing blast.

But ever I am tricked, and less
Daily my hopes and strength become;
And even I am stricken dumb
In this enfolding loneliness.

The snow falls, hushing the distant river's
moan,
Darkness enfolds me—and I am alone.

"Now when the King grew old he was filled with a mighty loathing for all his vassals and underlords and wished them to die. To this end he bad them come, with their ladies, to a great feast, and, summoning to his aid an aged poisoner who had been long in his employ, bad him prepare a poison of great potency. This he himself did put into the wine and, as he desired, all died hideously. But the King himself died also, from joy, as men allege."

KING AND POISONER TOGETHER :

"Twisting and twining the smoke grows up,
Wreathing and writhing the smoke drifts by;
To-night the lords of the earth shall sup,
To-night the lords of the earth shall die."

THE POISONER :

"Thrice distilled and trebly strong
That its labour may be short,
Listen to the merry song
Hissing through the big retort."

THE KING :

"They shall eat and they shall drink,
They shall wanton and grow gay;

Never a man of them shall think
That his end has come to-day."

"They shall jest and they shall laugh,
They shall banish every care;
As the subtle wine they quaff
Death shall gripe them, unaware."

THE POISONER:

"Winking white the bubbles rise
Through the limpid bowl of blue,
Wicked winking evil eyes
Searching for some ill to do."

THE KING:

"They shall press the little hand
Of their mistress, sitting by,
They shall feel their ardour fanned
By her hot impassioned sigh."

"They shall praise her coiling hair,
They shall mouth her wine-flushed cheek,
They shall lay her bosom bare
Till there breaks the first long shriek."

THE POISONER :

" Now the fire is grey and old
And the work is well-nigh done;
Now the glass is growing cold,
But a few more drops to run."

THE KING :

" They shall start and gasp and quail,
They shall rise and reel and fall,
They shall turn a jaundiced pale
Through the many-lighted hall."

" They shall retch and froth and squirm,
Wail and moan and grunt and cry,
They shall wriggle as the worm
While I laugh and watch them die."

THE POISONER :

" See! The phial is prepared,
Cold and still the poison sleeps :
In its heart old death lies snared,
In its depth corruption creeps."

THE KING :

" All the tortures men have known
Shall delight my gloating eyes,

And, I think, their dying groan
Will be almost Paradise."

"They shall find a seemly tomb
On the midden by the gate;
All shall see the lowest groom
Spurn the bodies of the great."

KING AND POISONER TOGETHER:

"Twisting and twining the smoke grows up,
Wreathing and writhing the smoke drifts by;
To-night the lords of the earth shall sup,
To-night the lords of the earth shall die."

"BY THAT SIN FELL THE ANGELS."

AN ALLEGORY OF AMBITION.

Low, lush, and level, swooning in the mist
Of placid noonday, the luxuriant plain
Swept onward to the mountains, and lay coiled
Around their feet, as some sleek emerald snake
Full gorged, and steeped in mid-day somnolence.
All ways were windless. Heavy fingered air
Pressed moist upon me; weariness ensnared
My stumbling feet, and almost I despaired
Ever to compass the appointed goal—
Those airy mountain heights that called to me
From the blue distance while I watched the kine
Grazing the long green grass contentedly.
Long had they called and beckoned me to come,
Leaving the fat abundance of my home
And pleasant pastures of my youth, to win
Their far pale peaks. As in a dream, I rose
And set upon my journey. Many days
Passed, and my striving seemed a thing in vain.

But now at last the long-sought cliffs were
nigh,
And I could mark the plumed waterfalls
Streaking the ashen sides, and see the track
Of last year's avalanche. Aloof and still,
Like a philosopher in thought they stood,
And seemed to ponder on the steady plash
Of their own rills. But here no gentle
sound
Of murmurous water soothed my thirsty
ear
With soft empleading. Wearily the stems,
Laden with too much fruitage, drooped
around
My path; the very birds forgot to sing,
And slept. I only in that listless land
Held my unswerving aim and onward
pressed,
While the sun dipped from heaven, and the
peak
Stretched forth a shadow hand across the
plain.
So crept the eve, and in the gathering cool
The careless, kindly, people of the land
Awoke from easy slumbering and flocked,
Mustered in merry bands and choruses,

To herald in the night with dance and play.
Songs rose. Sweet laughter sped along the air,
Soft smiling faces garlanded the fields,
And happiness swept o'er the weary earth
Like the soft passing of an angel's wing.
Some too there were that asked me whence I came,
Who seemed so weary and so travel stained,
And whither I was bound. But when they heard
I journeyed to the topmost citadel
Of those mysterious mountains, smiled at me;
For never yet, said they, had mortal man
Ventured beyond the foothill's gentle rise,
Nor ever should. There on the barren wastes
Reigned an almighty God, who would not brook
That any mortal wanderer should disturb
His high impenetrable solitude.
So spake they : but they bid me stay awhile
Among the happy people of the land,
Who for an hour of toil had length of joy,
And lived untasting weariness or grief

Till, when the locks grew silver and the limbs
Moved slower in the dance and age drew nigh,
Death found them sleeping,—left them still asleep.
And almost I had stayed, when suddenly
The pinnacle that crowned the darkening range
Clove into the sun's red rim, and I replied :
" Upon the mountain brows a clearer air
Glitters than in the mist-hung vale below.
And I will to the mountains. I will win
The guarded summit—then let death be mine
If the great God take me not to Himself."
With this I parted and I hasted on
To meet the shadow moving o'er the plain,
And passed into its coolness : soon the night
Fell, and the sleeping stars awoke ; a wind—
The thin small wind of sunset—softly blew,
And swept along the border of the hills,
And stole the weariness from out my limbs ;
So that I quickly came to where the fields
Rolled upwards, and the level pathway ceased.

Yet, in the strength of that enchanted eve,
Swifter I hastened o'er the mounting track
Than o'er the straight smooth road that lay below.
Onward and ever onward, till the sides
Stretched high above me, while the quiet moon
Swung slowly through the sky and touched the peaks,
Chiselling a world of ebon and ivory.
Stronger, and ever stronger, as the way
Steepened. Within my leaping heart there grew
A knowledge of the might that in me lay;
And round me gentle voices seemed to call,
And cry, and wonder, and encourage me
To win the summit; softly murmuring
That there was godhead, and that there the God
Waited to welcome me unto Himself.
And told me how the world would worship me,
And how that strength was given unto those
Who dared the heights, so that the heights became
Less than the little hillocks of the plain.

Swiftly I sped, swifter than e'er the goat
That fled in terror from my ringing feet;
Lightly from rocky crag I leaped
To rocky crag. The river roared beneath
In a white gleam of soft enticing foam—
And then was past. The dark rock loomed above
An instant—and I stood upon its crest.
Darkness grew thinner and alone remained
That last and highest spire, that like a flame
Burned upwards, golden in the morning light,
And in the evening golden, every hour
Fronting with steady brow the circling sun.
Awhile I paused, seeking how best to scale
The obdurate sides—and found a single ledge
Which like a thread slanted across the face.
Whereon, with careless ease and strength assured
I arrogantly swung. Fiercely, as stoops
From viewless heights an eagle that descries
A desolate lamb left lonely from the fold
And with embracing talons cleaves its heart,

So from the darkness and the far unknown
Fear swooped upon me and my heart was held.
No more I heard the voices, felt no more
The insistent urge. Limb lay on leaden limb
Powerless as in a dream. No hope, no strength
Sustained me. Wisdom's false and weighty tongue
Counselled abandonment—for I had won
More merit than the most, what gained it then
To lose in folly the assured reward
Of quiet honour, and the praise of men
Filling with music my remaining days.
Pride only, godliest of God's gifts to man
Stood by my side and with imperial tone
Awoke my heart, and through the agony
Of that imperilled traverse, held each step
Nearer the summit; till by cleft and ridge
Cornice and chimney at the last I stood
Victorious on that sacred pinnacle
And stretched my arms out to the rising sun.
Below the mists untangled and dispersed,

The green fields shone, and forth from every
home
Hastened the kindly folk; and turned their
eyes,
As was their wont, toward the storied
peaks.
Thus did they see me, blazoned in the light.
And raised a cry, a low and wondering cry
That rose and fell as the dull hum of bees
Sways in the limes of summer; rose and
swelled
Into a mighty shout to greet the God
Made manifest; nor knew that it was I
Whom late they chid. Clear through the
morning air
The welcome pealed, and crashed against
the cliffs,
And roared along the hollows, worship meet
For Man victorious by the might of Man,
Man the immortal Lord.—The thunderbolt
Fell as they cried, and I was smitten down,
Down from the heights, down, down into
the depths,
Down to the hidden womb of the crevass.
There have I lain for ages, there I lie,
Where the cold mountain sweat drops down
on me,

Where the warm radiance of the noonday sun
Comes not, only the biting winter blast
Curls in, and out, the crannies of the rock.
And here will lie for ever; that short space
Wherein I stood upon the sacred soil,
Gave me the curse of immortality.
Here do I lie, and here I think upon
The joyful careless children of the plain,
Who live so pleasantly mid dance and song
Nor ever strive to venture on the heights
That tower above their easy indolence.
Yet sometimes, when the soughing wind has hushed
And the hoarse river roar awhile is stayed
Within the grip of the fierce silent frost,
A sound comes faintly to my straining ears,
A sound of voices calling mightily
Upon the God, who once had shewed Himself
To their forefathers—so the tale is told,
An ancient tale, passing from sire to son.—
Then, though the cold has withered up my limbs,
And cramped my body, though my heart is chilled,
My eyes are blinded, then, despite of all,
I know that I have found my happiness.

SONG OF THE PLAIN FAIRIES.

Light upon the heather as a wind-blown
feather,
Swift as the swallows flight,
From the waking of the sky, when the dawn
draws nigh,
To the fluttering fall of night,

Onward, ever on, we swing, weaving wide
the fairy ring,
And the long limbs, soft and bare,
Are a-gliding and a-glance in the glimmer
of the dance,
And the sun glints red i' the hair.

Have ye seen a ripple pass o'er the summit
of the grass,
With never a hint of breeze?
Have ye heard a gentle sighing, coming
nearer, softly dying
In the distant line of trees?

'Tis the flying of the feet o'er the meadow
and the wheat,
Over the long low plain,
'Tis the calling of a voice, bidding all the
earth rejoice
In the sun and the wind and the rain.

But with the conning o'er of books the
mortal eye is blear,
And every tale of calumny has dulled the
mortal ear,
And mortal hearts are overgrown with web
and woof of pain,
And now it is the babes alone that hear the
fairy strain.

Red are the walls, and red
The floor, while overhead
Into red gloom grows up the ruby dome;
Fierce in the midst there glows,
And slowly ebbs and flows,
And winks, and laughs, the beacon of the gnome.

No wind has ever stirred,
No sound was ever heard,
But, silently, the spectres come and go;
Kings, prophets, maidens fair,
Gorgons with snake-tressed hair,
Monsters and demons, wander to and fro.

And by the flame there sits
The weaver of the wits,
The framer of a never finished plan.
The fevered gnome, the hosts
Of ever-changing ghosts,
The mocking flame, the shadowy hall, these are the mind of man.

God! They were sweet, those moments when a drop
Spilled from the brimming cup of happiness!
Fierce wine, o'ermounting from the golden bowl
Whose incense spreadeth joy throughout the world,
And whose full draught—but never has man known
The full deep draught of the enchanted wine,
Or if they drank, a single instant felt
The great wild kiss of the whole universe;
And then were mad, and wandered on and on
Seeking but never finding; last they died.
But sometimes when the god's enraptured arm
Raises on high the deep full-flowing cup,
Over the jewelled lip there steals a rill,
Which, with a slow meandering, creeps and winds
Down the embossed side, and gathering
Into a ruby pregnance, thence there falls
A single drop; and falling it divides
And ever finer grows, till at the last,

Like the thin cloud that rises up and round
The leaping waterfall, it dews the earth.
Oh in that hour a vapoured atom fell
Full on my lips—and ceased before I knew
The whole rich savour: yet 'twas nobly sweet.
So madly sweet that now I know the pain,
The dull deep pain, of recollection.
For every faint and passing gleam of joy
Is paid in full with double gloom of woe,
Throughout the long slow hours in which we dream
And strive once more to feel a faded bliss.
And sometimes faces round me seem to float
Of all I knew, and slowly merge in one.
Thy face! Again thy slender arms
Clasp softly round me; once again I feel
The slow soft rise and the precipitate fall
Of thy deep-sighing bosom, and my lips
Yearn forward as they strive to press a kiss
On that red mouth half-ope in ecstasy.
But ever as a dream that fades away
Before fulfilment of our joy has come,
So fadest thou; and I am left alone,
A desert wanderer in a lifeless land,
Alone, alone, to mourn upon my loss.
O bring the agate bowl that I may quaff

Deeply and long of bitter Lethe's stream,
So to forget that touch of the gods wine
And gratefully to die. My epitaph—
" All joy is but the harbinger of woe."

DEVILS.

There's a little devil flies
From your eyes, from your eyes,
To peep from the curls of your hair.
Then sidles down your cheek
With a merry elfish shriek,
Till he slips,
To the dimple by your lips
And nestles there.
(Which is wise.)

There's a little devil sleeps
In the deeps, in the deeps
Of the waters of your heart;
Till he wakens from his rest
And becomes a little pest,
For he rages,
And he won't lie down for ages.
(Played his part,
Back he creeps.)

Now the little devil "A"
Is a rogue with whom I play,
For he laughs and he jests and he smiles.
Oh, a saucy rascal he!
But the little devil " B "
Is too strong
To be trifled with for long.
(So good day
To your wiles!)

THE MUSICIAN'S DEATH.

I DIE to-night,
Music has spoken with new sound to me;
The soft-tonged voices ranging to and fro
Have called me hence.
I follow,
Where the echoing chord
Has shattered down the barriers, and has shown
Phantoms of melody.
Dim hands have beckoned from the clouded sun,
And round me grow strange forms in air and tree,
They smile, and open welcoming arms—and fade,
I die to-night.
The magpies flicker two and two. They omen good.
An answering joy imbues the blossomed earth,
It shares my happiness, never before so fair.
O God, for this Thy boon I worship Thee,
I die to-night.
Darkness has closed. Black-plumed the shadows glide,
The wings of gloom engulf my vision—ah
A light has burst the casement!
All is done.
I die to-night.

Down by the coppice the rabbits are out,
With a flirt and a flicker of furry white tails,
And the lakelet is ringed with the rises of trout,
And the thrush in the woodland is breaking his snails.
Tap, Tap,
Tap, Tap,
The thrush in the woodland is breaking his snails.

Down by the river the otter has shot
Silently, silently into the pool;
And the dipper is nodding his head with a-dot,
Carry one,—and away to his nest in the cool.
Tweet, Tweet,
Tweet, Tweet,
Carry one,—and away to his nest in the cool.

Down by the shingle the gulls are a-wheel,
The cormorant dives, and the peregrines soar,
And in from the open the languid waves steal

To nestle their tired little heads on the
shore.
Ssh, Sss;
Ssh, Sss,
To nestle their tired little heads on the
shore.

Down by the garden my lassie and I
Have met. The thrush ceases. The
little waves whist.
The rabbits are still and the birds do not
fly.
For I and my lassie have met and have
kissed.
Hush! Hush!
Hush! Hush!
For he and his lassie have met and have
kissed.

CHACUN À SON GOÛT

(A SQUIB).

THE well-bred youth, who wants a spree,
Goes to a university:
The washerwoman, from her tub,
Seeks solace in the cosy pub:
The hermit, with his vigils weary,
Snarls hell at those who doubt his theory:
And flies, when their gyrations jade
Fall victims to the marmalade.
"De gustibus"—then who am I
To praise the saint, or blame the fly!

WIND!

Out to the wet, the wind, the cold
I wandered, and my heart was held in pain;
And thought on things unutterably old,
And felt the mail-clad fingers of the rain
Clutching my brow, while ever in my brain
The rushing gale found echo; and it told
An elemental tale of lust and gold,
Of white flesh reddening with bloody stain,
Of hearts betrayed and human kindness sold.
Then from my breast the griping weakness rolled
And strength encompassed me, and left me bold.
So, comforted, I fared back again.

(D 447)

BASS SONG.

I WHO was late so strong, nor feared ought
That man or fate contrived,
Now wander as a thing distraught
Of all my wits deprived.

The steed within the stable champs,
The falcon mews upon her perch,
My banner flaunts not o'er the camps,
And stains my arms besmirch.

Cursed the day when first we met,
And thrice accursed those wanton eyes
That snared me in their silken net
And hold me as their prize.

The idle hours I vainly wait
Nor may my steps remove,
For, while I love, I strive to hate
And while I hate, I love.

Our Lady, save her soul from harm
And pity, pity me!
Saint Dennis, nerve a warrior's arm
To strike—and to be free.

COME! The trumpet call sprang throbbing
Round the sleepy earth.
Come! The evil hour is darkening; come my sons to succour her who
Gave ye birth.

Come! The eagle's beak is crimsoned
With your brother's gore.
Come ye, prove your love and kinship, prove your never conquered spirit
As of yore.

O'er the white Canadian mountains
O'er the thorny veldt
O'er the prairie, o'er the desert, o'er the fevered mango marshes,
Where men dwelt.

Long forgetting long forgotten,
O'er the lonely plains,
O'er the mine fields, o'er the Indian forests steaming, sweltering, reeking
In the rains.

Swept the call; and left the heart-strings
Quivering into sound

Of the men whom Britain nurtured, ere they
left her fields and orchards
Outward bound.

Till they rallied to their mother
Spurning ease and peace
Blazoning her name in Flanders, Africa,
and the many-storied
Chersonese.

And our hearts are filled with gladness
At their mighty deeds,
Those who heard the mother's summons, and
from every land have mustered
To her needs.

Yet amid the roar and crashing
Of our torrent pride,
You may hear the under murmur, softly
moaning, softly mourning
Those that died.

APRIL, 1917.

THERE'S a magic in the moorland, there's a magic in the rain
Sweeping onward, grey and gusty, o'er the stretching midland plain,
There's a magic in the mountains climbing ragged to the sky,
And a thousand little magics in the dipping peewit's cry.

There's a lazy lilt of laughter in the streams that hasten down
To the low lush meadow pastures from the upland bleak and brown;
And o'er every copse and hedgerow spreads a misty veil of green,
And the light-clad earth is dancing in the sunlight's fitful sheen.

But the sad wind softly soughing holds a distant cry of pain,
And borne upon the eddies drift the spirits of the slain,
Who wonder at the springtime, for 'mid gun and sword and lance
The spring has never broken on the battle-fields of France.

I.

The scent of the stars is drifted
Silently down the night,
Soft as the mist wind-scattered,
To stealing grey wreaths tattered,
With timid moonbeams sifted
To opalescent light.
Oh the song of the faded moonbeams,
The scent of the stars at night.

The touch of the night has burnished
This dross of thought away;
With that wild incense drunken
The busy mind is sunken,
The senses gleam untarnished,
Forgotten feelings play,
A melody, a harmony,
To hymn their holiday.

II.

The boundaries are vanished,
The barriers o'erthrown,
For the darkness is banished
The secret is known—
That the sound and the sight and the savour
Are three and yet one.

They are tendrils set free
From the seat of the soul,
And the soul is the three,
And the three are the whole—
The scroll that is written, the fingers
That write on the scroll.

III.

Musing on a night alone,
With the springtide on her throne,
All the stars, awake, and winking
Seemed to mock my weary thinking.
Woods and hills and dells were quiet,
Hushed all the season's riot,
And a trance of beauty lay
O'er that stilly night in May.

From her bondage slipping free
Came the queen of poesy,
At the magic of whose spell
Gates were opened, fetters fell;
Every loveliness did seem
Merged in a more lovely dream,
Where the sounds had scent and colour,
And the scents were richer, fuller,
Singing sweetly, many hued;
And the landscape was imbued

With a rainbow harmony.
While each glimpsed star and tree
Scattered in an odorous sea
Incenses of Araby.

White and soft,
Soft and white,
The snow drifts past me and into the night;
Soft and white,
White and soft,
The snow comes trembling down from aloft.

Bleak and cold,
Cold and bleak,
The wind blows up through the ice-bound creek;
Cold and bleak,
Bleak and cold,
The wind blows over the shuddering wold.

Slow and tired,
Tired and slow,
Are the few sheep plodding before in the snow;
Tired and slow,
Slow and tired,
Are the grey sheep floundering home to be byred.

Warm and red,
Red and warm,
The light shines out from the lonely farm;

Red and warm,
Warm and red,
Is the light from the watching window shed.

THE RECLUSE'S DAUGHTER.

The dappled sky shines bright between the trees,
The birds are singing: ever through the grove
The cuckoo throbs;—and all alone I rove
Baring my bosom to the wanton breeze.

The king-bird poises, jewelled on the flag,
Preening before his mate, and to the hind
With eager belling comes the many tyned
Monarch of all, the conquering conquered stag.

All else is joyous in the surge of Spring,
Alone I wander, and my heart is sad;
No lover draweth nigh to make me glad,
And I may find no joy in anything.

For me there lurks a moaning in the morn,
A dull oppression in the heat of day,
And when the last long beams are wrapped in grey
With sorrow as my mate I couch forlorn.

The dappled sky shines bright between the trees,
The birds are singing; ever through the grove

The cuckoo throbs—yet all alone I rove
And bare my bosom to the wantoning
breeze.

SONNET.

Behind my house there crawls a festered lane,
Where all night long half-lighted windows wink
From low-browed casements, and incarnate drink
Snores, shouts, and reels, and snores and shouts again.
Hoarse, poison-throated vixens wail and jeer,
And, anger-baited, snarl their beastly fill,
With crossed arms sprawling on the window-sill,
Bared fangs, dull bloody eyes and obscene leer.
There shawl-clad drabs pursue their ancient trade,
Bare-footed children cower in hurried flight,
There man is crucified with none to aid,
For even God has hidden his face in fright.
Why do I laugh, when people say to me,
"This is our Christian twentieth century"?

MELANCHOLIA.

I READ of others' joys, and they
Are grief to me;
I read of others' pains, and there
My grief I see.
The faltering wind breathes songs of woe
The sunbeams, flitting to and fro
Have lost their glee.

A tired melancholy seems
To wander round,
Stealing the brightness and the joy
From sight and sound;
How sweet and soft and still is death,
Only a ceasing of the breath,
A secret found!

Long lingering life holds nought for me
Nor leaden years,
Feeble the gleams of joy that break
The rain of tears;
Strength is the goblet, fame the wine
I cannot know them. Only mine
The dust of fears.

Had I the power one line to pen
Of living fire,
To limn along the scroll of life
My heart's desire,

Glad would I pass beneath the ground,
And, passing, hold that I had found
A worthy hire.

But I must go, and nothing leave
To gild my name.
No smallest meed to me is given
Of lasting fame.
To die, and quick to be forgot,
To perish ever; such my lot
And such my shame!

THE SONG OF THE HIGH ROAD.

Cresting the hill and adown to the valley,
Under the bridges and over the stream,
Now by the flower-panelled copses I dally,
Now hurry on through the smoke and the steam.

Endless and effortless, journeying onward,
Linking the homes and the tillage of man,
The long road, the high road, I wind through the greensward,
Century bleached since first I began.

Armies have marched me, fierce for the battle,
Broken and shattered have sought for my aid;
Light from the stile comes the lover's soft prattle
Groans of the dying swell low from the shade.

Aged was I when the chariots coursed me,
Young I remain as the lorries roll by;
Many have driven me, many have horsed me,
The long road, the white road, the high road am I.

THE MIDNIGHT SEA.

Sleepily sighing the wind o'er the waters entreateth,
Sleepily answer the waves caressing the shore,
Till I yearn for the leap from the height to the fathoms beneath me
And the long, long sleep of the dead who have ventured before.

Down through the silent and shimmering deeps of the ocean
In that great stillness at last would I find me my rest :
While the sea maidens wove wondering circles around me
And the black seaweed enmeshed its roots in my breast.

LUNA DIES ET NOX, ET NOCTIS SIGNA SEVERA.

The dark boughs feathered against the sky
The great moon framing the distant keep,
The murmur of wings that hasten by,
The ripples that wake the tarn from sleep;

They hymn the thoughts of an ancient creed,
These soul-deep wakings of the night,
Till spectres of fear around me speed
And I fly from the powers of the dark in fright.

But when the brightness of day returns
The spirit moves from heart to brain,
And man the ancestral terror spurns
Till night recovers her power again.

ELM LEAVES.

The young elm leaves are like little green
wrens,
Little green wrens just out of the nest.
They crowd together for company's sake,
And ruffle their wings in the sun, and
quake
When the shadow goes stalking by.
But what they twitter of nobody kens;
What they chirp as they sit at rest—
Little green wrens just out of the nest—
We gather not, you and I.

The old elm leaves are harsh old leaves
With a shrill and a scolding tongue,
And the things they say and the thoughts
they think
Were better to leave unsung.
They rattle their bones, those shrivelled
crones,
Till the west wind comes to end their moans,
And hurry them helpless over the stones,
Where walking is good when the wind is
high,
And a very good thing when leaves are dry,
Oh—a very good thing say I.

VAGRANT'S SONG.

HAIL! Brother Wind and Sister Sea.
Hail! all my comrades of a thousand hills.
I am of your communion entered free
And partner of your wills.

So round the world and round the world and round the world I roam,
And none of the world has a home for me, for all of the world is home;
And never a friend and never a mate and never a child have I,
But kith and kin from the wild I win, and comrades from the sky.

The hoarse-mouthed roaring of the flood,
And far complaining of the avalanche,
The troubled murmur of the wood,
And groaning of the branch;

These are the tongues that speak to me, the voices that bid me come,
Leaving the arrogant noise of men and the petulant city's hum;
Leaving the wisdom of written words, to walk with the ancient powers,
To learn the lore of the gods of yore, in the slow and pregnant hours.

Thou art she who has passed
In the dreams of the night,
Scarce beheld ere the blast
Has torn thee from sight,
And has left me despairing, enthralled,
pursuing thy shadowy flight.

Thou art she whom I chased
In the glimmer of sleep
Through the forest, the waste,
Through the air and the deep,
Through the ultimate regions of space, by
the paths which the meteors keep.

Betwixt sleeping and waking
Thy presence is nigh;
When the sunrise is flaking
The plains of the sky
Thou are here, thou art gone—yet the
shadows still hold the soft breath of thy
sigh.

Ere the world was create
Thou wert destined for me,
Thou wert formed as my mate
When the covering sea
Was swept back from the earth, and the
spirits of love and of life were set free

When the dawn wind was sweeping
Wide over the earth
All the wild folk came creeping
To watch o'er thy birth,
The gnome and the nymph and the mermaid
from mountain and forest and firth.

All the laughter of morn,
And the sadness of eve,
Within thee were born
As the mists interweave
And are lost in the light, as the corn and
the flowers are bound up in the sheave.

In thy voice there sounds low
The soft song of the rills,
And enthroned on thy brow
Shines the calm of the hills,
And thy presence is sweet with the dew
that the darkness of midnight distils.

When my spirit was slain
And my comrade despair,
When my living was pain,
All at once thou wert there,
And the sorrows had fled at the touch of
thy bosom, the scent of thy hair.

There are moments apart
When a happiness seems
To steal over my heart,
And an instant there gleams
A new light in the sun—then I know thou art nigh, O my love of the dreams.

Thou art mine, thou art mine
Mine, and only for me!
I am thine, I am thine!
As the weariest bee
Flies straight to the flower that it loves, so come I unto thee.

DESIDERIUM.

If I could go as the wind goes, treading the tree tops,
Trailing the clouds in my hair, and with indolent finger whirling
Into a pillar of smoke the dull white dust of the road;
If I were one with the wind, with his might endowed and his swiftness,
Master of unthought lands, and of heaven's wide courts enfranchised
Even to the feet of God—O soon should I weary of wandering
Weary of strength and swiftness in hunger for you the mortal.
Then should we go together to quiet familiar places,
Dabble our morning feet in the dew-green pastures of Meath,
Savour the gorse of Connaught, see Muckish and Errigal starkly
Raising eternal shoulders beneath a hastening sky.

TO EUTYCHE.

I HAD forgotten Love. Amid the throng
Of more insistent uses He was lost
And I was well contented, or at most
Suffered a little sadness when His song
Fell soft from other lips, or when I caught
His image in the eyes of those He taught.

I had forgotten Love; except to vaunt
That I had snapped His chains; until you came;
And I awoke, and vainly cried His name,
And sought Him everywhere, but found His haunt
Unknown; forlorn, I turned; and close beside
Lost Love stood shyly, waiting as my guide.

TO EUTYCHE.

That morning when you leaned across the wall,
—Grim grey old wall bear witness to our tryst—
The very sun had left the heavens and kissed
Your face, such shining radiance crowned you all;
And in the careless circles of your hair
He hung, the humblest gem for you to wear.

Your eyes were mine. Gazing I seemed to hear
The slow sweet music of a distant bell
Tolling within them, bidding me draw near
To sanctuary. They could not say farewell.
Yet had your lips commanded me to part,
No word I answered—Dearest, I had no heart.

TO EUTYCHE.

Four weary moons have waned since last we met,
And now all clouds are banished from the day;
And I may follow, humbly, in the way
Where, like the echo of a minuet,
Your shy slim figure dances : and the old
Ill-humoured world stops spinning to behold.

But how may I, compact of trodden clay,
Approach your singing spirit? How aspire
To purge my grossness in your splendid fire?
How bid you stoop? How urge myself to say?
"I, who have naught to offer, dare to prove
The everlasting brightness of your love?"

TO EUTYCHE.

All secrets of deep waters; all delights
Of summer evenings and of morning May;
All innocence of laughter; and the gay
Embroidery of blossom; and the night's
Peace; and the cool caressings of the breeze;
And music's imagery. You are these.

Yet more than these. Never has poet's lyre
Entuned that wild, rare, quintessential grace,
'Twas such, from his Olympian dwelling-place,
Drew down great Jove, with mortal love afire,
Leaving deep-bosomed Juno to repine —
While Venus laughed amid the laughing wine.

TO EUTYCHE.

Always I craved to see you in the sun
That made your gold more golden. It befell,
One day you stood upon a little swell
Of seaside turf; a strand of hair, undone,
Swayed in the wind, and in the wind's bold face
You laughed. I saw the sullen shadow race

Wind-sped, to punish you for your disdain.
And all at once there came the darkening thought
That o'er our love some shadow, sorrow fraught
Might haste. Dear child, I could not bear the pain
Of even the thought. But lo! the repentant blast
Unveiled the sun, and swept the shadow past.

TO EUTYCHE.

If I were given a wish, it should be this :
For one full hour in sunlit words to sing
A strain that should from loftiest heaven bring
The angels, tranced in more than heavenly bliss,
And shrine throughout the never-dying days
Immortal beauty in immortal praise.

So should the world adore you; and the saint
Turn from his pallid deities to bow
His lowlier knees before your steadfast brow;
And in your worship should all creeds grow faint,
All doubts be silenced, and accomplished truth
Shine like a star upon the head of youth.

TO EUTYCHE.

Let this be said. Although our paths must wind
Henceforth for ever sundered, yet a space
I was participator of your grace;
A smile, a look, a gentle speech, a kind
Heart-quickening hand touch. Are these things so small
That I can now forget them, who let fall

No slightest syllable that stirred the bloom
Of those beloved lips. Nay, these shall beam
Candles unquenchable, whose holy gleam
Shall light this life, and at the last illume
Even the sunless mansions of the dead,
And make them beautiful. Let this be said.

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